

**VAMPIRIC REMEDIATION—
THE VAMPIRE AS A SELF-REFLEXIVE TECHNIQUE IN *DRACULA*
(1897), *NOSFERATU* (1922) AND *SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE* (2000)**

Alexander Lehner (University of Augsburg)

Abstract: *This paper aims at describing the self-reflexive functions of the vampire through the lens of remediation. First, I will describe remediation as the central form of representation used in the novel Dracula (1897). Its epistolary form remediates various contemporary high-tech media that are compiled as typewritten pages: It uses a hypermedia strategy. Dracula, the creature, mirrors this technique, since he and his abilities are an amalgamation of the characteristics of contemporary media. Dracula tries to remediate itself (that is to rehabilitate) in the shifting media-landscape of the outgoing 19th century and self-reflexively addresses this through the vampire's connection to media. Second, Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens (dir. Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, 1922) deviates from this hypermedia strategy and argues for film's immediacy. However, it also self-consciously addresses its state as an adaptation of Dracula and clearly acknowledges its medium when vampirism is involved within the film itself. Nosferatu connects vampirism with cinema and its techniques and, consequently, presents its vampire, 'Count Orlok', as a personification of film instead of an amalgamation of different media. Shadow of the Vampire (dir. Edmund Elias Merhige, 2000), then, is a refashioning within the medium: it is Nosferatu's fictional making-of. Here, the borders between cinema and vampirism and between medium and reality collapse, as Shadow of the Vampire not only borrows the style and story of Nosferatu, but also incorporates the history and the myths surrounding the production of this seminal vampire movie. Consequently, it argues for film's failure as a medium of immediacy facing the new hypermedia-landscape of the beginning 21st century. These three iterations of the vampire and remediation demonstrate how the vampire has been functionalized as a self-reflexive technique to speak about the medium it is depicted in, be it on the brink of a changing media-landscape, at the beginning of movies as the medium of immediacy, or its existence as an established art form at the emerging digital age.*

Keywords: *vampire; remediation; self-conscious[ness]; Dracula (1897); Nosferatu (1922); Shadow of the Vampire (2000); meta-cinema.*

Introduction

I will use the concept of remediation as conceived by Bolter and Grusin in their monograph *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (2000 [1999]) to demonstrate that the vampire has been used as a self-reflexive technique to reflect on the media it is been portrayed in and how media represent themselves in a shifting media-landscape. Taking Stoker's *Dracula* (1897)¹ as a starting point, I argue that this novel utilizes a hypermedia strategy by remediating contemporary high-tech media via a typewriter:

¹ Quotations taken from *Dracula* (1897; here: Stoker 1997 [1897]) will be indicated by a [D], followed by the page number.

They are transcribed and compiled as the novel the reader holds in their hands. On the one hand, this hypermedia strategy causes a multiplication of mediation that resembles the medial life of the contemporaries and therefore a form of reality (cf. Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 53). On the other hand, the transcription is an eradication of the elements that connect the texts to their authors' life, like handwriting, imperfections, and canceled words. The hypermedia strategy causes the novel to rest in a state between life (resembling the media-reality) and death (drained from markers of life). Additionally, the 'creature Dracula' mirrors this technique, since he and his abilities are based on the novel *Dracula's* media. The novel's hypermedia strategy and the vampire, here, become techniques to speak about the novel's necessity to remediate new media to rehabilitate the medium of the novel and to prepare it for the emerging media-landscape.

However, when the vampire enters cinema, the creature becomes a method through which movies self-reflexively speak about themselves. I will demonstrate this with my first filmic example—*Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (1922)². *Nosferatu* portrays film as prime example of immediacy by self-consciously addressing its predecessor *Dracula*, using real settings, different forms of remediation, and hypermedia strategies. Further, the vampire is connected to cinema through metaphor and filmic strategies. This chapter also includes a section that briefly discusses a plethora of vampire movies and their self-reflexive interpretations. Therefore, the vampire as a self-reflexive technique is by no means limited to the special cases analyzed in this article.

In *Shadow of the Vampire* (2000)³, then, this separation of medium, reality, and their corresponding logics collapses in a refashioning of 'film in film'. As a fictional making-of it uses the film-within-a-film structure. It addresses the shifting media-environment at the beginning of the new millennium and the failure of (filmic) immediacy by devaluing *Nosferatu's* aesthetic core.

However, I limit myself to these three iterations: [i] the original novel *Dracula*, [ii] *Nosferatu* as its first adaptation and [iii] *Shadow of the Vampire* as decidedly meta-fictional re-iteration. Whereas this study could also include Herzog's *Nosferatu: Phantom der Nacht* (1979), I refrain from including this movie. I chose those three texts because they mark turning points in their respective media-landscapes that are aesthetically discussed in these works: [i] the novel rivaling different high-tech media (*Dracula*), [ii] the beginning of movies as the medium of the 20th century (*Nosferatu*), [iii] and the appearance and rise of digital hypermedia that create a new sense of experiential reality by multiplying the forms of mediation (*Shadow of the Vampire*).

***Dracula*—Opus and Creature of Media**

In terms of structure and content, the novel *Dracula* (1897) contains various forms of media technology that resemble the supernatural powers of the 'eponymous monster'.⁴ Since *Dracula* is an epistolary novel, it is a collage made from textual forms such as

² In English, the translation *Nosferatu: A Symphony of Horror* is common. Quotations taken from *Nosferatu* (1922; here: Murnau 2007 [1922]) will be indicated by an [N], followed by the run time.

³ Quotations taken from *Shadow of the Vampire* (2000; here: Merhige 2002 [2000]) will be indicated by an [SV], followed by the run time.

⁴ The connection between technology and the supernatural can also be found in the mind-set of the contemporaries of the novel *Dracula* (cf. Abbott 2007: 37–38).

journal entries, memos, or letters. Alongside these traditional forms there are contemporary media included as well, like telegrams and newspaper articles. Also, high-tech means of media-production like the phonograph and the typewriter feature prominently. The texts are compiled and transcribed by Mina into machine-written pages: “[I]n all the mass of material of which the record is composed, there is hardly one authentic document; nothing but a mass of type-writing” (*D*: 326). The conventional interpretation of this passage would be in terms of evidence. Through the typewriter’s remediation of the original documents, they have become mere copies and lost their former authenticity (Page 2011: 110): “[T]he typewriter is the technology through which all other technologies in the novel (stenography, phonographic records, and telegraphed messages) are produced and made accessible [...] to the reader” (Page 2011: 109). In connecting this with Kittler’s claim that “mechanized writing [reduces] the very forms, differences and frequencies of its letters [...] to formulas” (Kittler 1999 [1986]: 16), one can also ascertain the lifelessness of writing produced via a typewriter that Kittler calls a “lack of expression of individuals or the trace of bodies” (*ibid.*). The typewriter drains earlier forms of writing from their “traces of the author’s body” (Page 2011: 110) and therefore creates analogies between vampirism and the typewriter as the central mode of mediation in *Dracula*: both drain something that was alive before from their markers of life and create the undead.

Here, I propose an interpretation of this structure in terms of remediation that adds to this notion. Bolter and Grusin describe remediation as “the representation of one medium in another” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 45). By remediating various media within the novel and transcribing them via typewriter, *Dracula* actually utilizes a hypermedia strategy to create realism. As Bolter and Grusin state, “digital hypermedia seek the real by multiplying mediation so as to create a feeling of fullness, a satiety of experience, which can be taken as reality” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 53). The novel *Dracula* uses a similar approach, as it recreates the media fullness and experience at the end of the 19th century by using a prototypic hypermedia method. A similar claim has already been made by Kittler, who sees Mina and her typewriting abilities as an ‘Interface’ between specific streams of data, i.e. the different media forming the novel: handwritten diaries, phonograph-records, newspaper-clippings, telegrams, files and logs (Kittler 1995 [1985]: 450). However, this does not undermine the traditional interpretation in terms of authenticity but rather contributes to the ambiguity of Mina’s statement: Where it drains formerly authentic documents from their markers of life, the novel recreates the media experience of its contemporaries and, consequently, a form of reality.

This prototypic hypermedia strategy and the documents drained from markers of life situate the novel in a state of limbo between life and death and, thus, connect this structure to the vampire. Additionally, the typewritten pages also connect to the vampire’s immortality. They are finished products that cannot be changed, contrasting hand-written text, in which canceled words and alterations belong to the process of creation. Therefore, the typewritten pages in their drained and inauthentic form can potentially carry on the same content forever and make the conveyed story of *Dracula* virtually immortal.

This connection between vampirism and media is also apparent in the character of Count Dracula himself. Kittler considers him a being of media: “Dracula, as he pertains

under technological conditions alone, is merely the stochastic noise of the messaging-channels themselves”⁵ (Kittler 1993: 50; transl.). Wicke discusses this phenomenon in her article ‘Vampiric Typewriting’ (1992) which reads *Dracula* as a “chaotic reaction-formation in advance of modernism, wildly taking on the imprints of mass culture” (Wicke 1992: 469). She claims that “*Dracula*’s individual powers all have their analogue in the field of the mass cultural; he comprises the techniques of consumption” (Wicke 1992: 475). Wicke goes on to connect the phonograph to him calling from afar and without being bodily present, the telegraph to his telepathic ability, the circulation of *Kodaks* (photographs) without the depicted object to the circulation of his blood without him present, the ubiquity of advertising to him vitiating space, and the mutability of mass culture itself to the count’s ability to change into a bat or mist at will (cf. Wicke 1992: 475–476).

This integration of mass media personified in the ‘creature *Dracula*’ highlights the interdependence of the novel *Dracula* and the then new media. As Bolter and Grusin state, there is no such thing as an isolated medium; they all influence each other: “What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 15).

Dracula tries to situate its medium, the novel, in a shifting media-landscape that anticipates the technological hypermedia-reality of today (Galini 1986: 4). Kittler sees *Dracula* as a story of technical media’s final victory over the vampire (Kittler 1986: 135; Kittler 1999 [1986]: 86) which could be considered a victory over the novel in this constellation. I would argue that *Dracula* rather should be categorized in Bolter and Grusin’s terms as remediating newer forms of media: “Our culture conceives of each medium or constellation of media as it responds to, competes with, and reforms other media. [...] No medium, it seems, can now function independently and establish its own separate and purified space of cultural meaning” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 55). The vampiric structure of the novel and its personification through the ‘creature *Dracula*’ in the novel acknowledge this fact and try to reform its medium (cf. Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 56, 60–62) by sacrificing the media borders of the novel. Consequently, the vampire becomes a self-reflexive technique to speak about the situation of the novel in the emerging media-world of the ending 19th century.

In this chapter, I have addressed the remediation of the contemporary high-tech media within the structure of the novel *Dracula*. The typewriter has been characterized as a vampiric technology of mediation that comprises different media within the body of the novel but drains them from their markers of life. However, the novel also creates a prototypic hypermedia structure, creating a resemblance of the media reality. Especially the ‘creature *Dracula*’ shows the mutual interdependence of media and becomes a self-reflexive technique to rehabilitate the novel in a shifting media-environment.

In movies, however, the vampire is not associated with media in general anymore but film. One of *Dracula*’s first adaptations, Friedrich Wilhelm [F. W.] Murnau’s *Nosferatu* (1922) addresses this shift through techniques of remediation and by deploying the logic of transparent immediacy. Here, another rhetoric of remediation as reform is employed

⁵ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “*Dracula*, wie er unter technologischen Bedingungen einzig überdauert, ist nur noch das stochastische Rauschen der Nachrichtenkanäle selber” (Kittler 1993: 50).

using the vampire as a self-reflexive technique, stating that film has become the (alleged) epitome of immediacy. Here, I will address two issues: First, how *Nosferatu* reflects on its state as an adaptation and, second, how cinema and vampirism are connected in *Nosferatu*.

***Nosferatu* as Self-Reflexive Adaptation and Plea for Film's Immediacy**

Nosferatu (1922) addresses its connection to the novel *Dracula* with a note of warning: “Nosferatu—doesn't this word sound like the cry of a bird of the dead? Beware of saying it, otherwise the images of life fade to shadows, ghostly dreams emerge from the heart and feed on your blood”⁶ (*N*: 0:03:00; transl.). Here, the process of adapting *Nosferatu* from *Dracula* is alluded to and connected to film's potential for immediacy. Therefore, *Nosferatu* represents remediation as reform (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 59–62). This becomes apparent with Bolter and Grusin's explanation of the term ‘remediation’: “We have adopted the word to express the way in which one medium is seen by our culture as forming or improving upon another. [...] The assumption of reform is so strong that a new medium is now expected to justify itself by improving on a predecessor” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 59). *Nosferatu* (‘a film’) tries to medially overcome its predecessor, *Dracula* (‘a novel’), and self-reflexively addresses this in this opening note.

First there is *Nosferatu* as a word—an allusion to the textual *Dracula*. Next, this word shifts into images of life. The former text of *Dracula* becomes the chosen set of the film that exists in reality. Filming on actual locations is especially noteworthy, since German Expressionism heavily relied on studio productions (cf. Ruthner 2006: 29–54; Abbott 2007: 51). Then, the images of life fade to shadows; the images are shot on location and made into film.

In this textual insert, the steps of adapting *Dracula* to *Nosferatu* are alluded to and also qualified by the level of immediacy. Whereas the word just sounds like the cry of a vulture, the shadows (representing early film) actually suck the audience's blood. By using real settings and qualifying the viewing-experience as almost real, film is portrayed as a medium that uses the logic of transparent immediacy that tries to (and, in the aesthetic argumentation of *Nosferatu*, almost succeeds to) erase its own medium.

Before this insert appears, *Nosferatu* starts with the literal adaptation of a book into the medium film: a form of remediation as absorption. Bolter and Grusin describe this form of remediation as follows: “[T]he new medium can remediate by trying to absorb the older medium entirely, so that the discontinuities between the two are minimized” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 47). *Nosferatu* does this by absorbing the entirety of the book as a medium.

⁶ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Nosferatu—tönt dieses Wort nicht wie der mitternächtliche Ruf eines Totenvogels? Hüte Dich es zu sagen, sonst verblassen die Bilder des Lebens zu Schatten, spukhafte Träume steigen aus dem Herzen und nähren sich von Deinem Blut” (*N*: 0:03:00).



Figure 1. This still from *Nosferatu* shows how real settings were used in the production of the film (*N*: 0:20:30); screenshot taken by the author.

Nosferatu presents itself as “[t]he account of the Great Death in Wisborg anno Domini 1836”⁷ (*N*: 0:02:50; transl.). This text is presented as a real book and not as a conventional textual insert. It is integrated into film, as described by Bolter and Grusin in the quotation above. This also adds to the self-reflexive allusion to *Nosferatu* as an adaptation from literature, since this book becomes the very origin of the movie: It is the source of the narrator and renders *Nosferatu* a kind of manuscript fiction. Other texts embedded in this filmic structure are the book *Of Vampires, Terrifying Ghosts, Sorcery and the Seven Deadly Sins*⁸ (*N*: 0:16:42; transl.), Hutter’s journal (*N*: 0:30:10; *N*: 0:51:40), a newspaper article about the plague epidemic (*N*: 0:54:40), the log of the ship’s crew, and a note about the curfew (*N*: 1:14:50). Consequently, the camera acts similar to the typewriter in terms of remediation—but rather than to compile the different texts as typed pages, the film captures them on celluloid. The difference, however, is that film can show the documents in their typographical as well as medial characteristics (excluding haptic feedback); the markers of life, despite not being completely intact, can be shown in filmic representation. Nevertheless, *Nosferatu*’s

⁷ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Die Aufzeichnungen über das Große Sterben in Wisborg anno Domini 1836” (*N*: 0:02:50).

⁸ As translated by the author. Original text [‘book title’] in German: *Von Vampyren erschrecklichen [sic] Geistern, Zauberreyen [sic] und den sieben Todsünden* (*N*: 0:16:42).

camera also differs from the typewriter in that it is never the center of attention in the movie: “Dracula movies [were] [...] merely a form of controlling the audience’s attention, which distracted with all their might [...] from the noise of the apparatus. What’s never in the frame were Mina Harker’s typewriter and Dr. Seward’s phonograph. That’s how solidly united they are running with the film-projector”⁹ (Kittler 1993: 56; transl.). The film itself never acknowledges the technologies used in *Dracula* nor does it acknowledge its own media of technical reproduction: the camera and the projector. It tries to erase its mediation to create immediacy.

Through remediation as absorption, *Nosferatu* creates an aesthetic argument about the supremacy of cinema in terms of immediacy. It (predominantly) integrates textual media and surpasses the typewriter when it comes to reproducing the markers of life. The film enhances the absorbing component of the typewriter with the ability to remediate while preserving their visual authenticity. However, I have not addressed how cinema is connected to vampirism. The next section will therefore discuss the connection between vampirism and cinema on a metaphorical level and the film’s connotation of hypermediacy with the vampire.

***Nosferatu*—Cinema and Vampirism**

In this section, I will demonstrate that Hutter’s journey into Count Orlok’s realm is portrayed as a symbolic journey into the realm of cinema, connecting vampirism and film through diegetic remarks. This connection also extends to the level of style, as the logic of transparent immediacy is contrasted with sequences deploying the logic of hypermedia. These portray at the same time Count Orlok’s abilities and render him a personification of film itself.

In his 1896 report concerning the presentation of Lumière’s *Cinématographe*, Maxim Gorky speaks of the *Kingdom of Shadows*: “Last night I was in the *Kingdom of Shadows*. [...] It is no life but its shadow, it is not motion but its soundless spectre” (Gorky 1996: 5). He describes attending a cinematic presentation as a form of entering the world of ghosts, since the images appear to be just lifeless revenants of their real counterpart.

The ghostliness of attending cinema in Gorky’s descriptions is already adapted in the beginning of *Nosferatu*, as Knock assigns Hutter his task: “Travel fast, travel well, young friend, into the land of ghosts”¹⁰ (*N*: 0:09:24; transl.). Hutter repeats this description of Transylvania as he informs Ellen of his forthcoming journey: “I travel far[-]far away into the land of thieves and ghosts!”¹¹ (*N*: 0:09:45; transl.). The ghosts of this country seem to be such a peculiar element, that the actual name of the destination does not need to be mentioned. As Hutter travels into the country, he has to cross a bridge at sundown, which marks the border between his world and the realm of ghosts. The narrator comments: “As soon as Hutter had crossed the bridge, uncanny visions

⁹ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Draculafilme [waren] [...] nur eine Aufmerksamkeitssteuerung, die mit aller Macht [...] vom Surren der Apparatur ablenkte. Was nirgendwo ins Bild kam, waren Mina Harkers Schreibmaschine und Dr. Swards Phonograph. So solidarisch mit ihnen läuft der Filmprojektor” (Kittler 1993: 56).

¹⁰ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Reisen Sie schnell, reisen Sie gut, junger Freund, in das Land der Gespenster” (*N*: 0:09:24).

¹¹ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Ich reise weitweit [*sic*] fort in das Land der Diebe und Gespenster!” (*N*: 0:09:45).

took him over, of which he had often told me”¹² (N: 0:21:40; transl.). The bridge acts as a kind of portal to the spirit realm. Together with the beginning of the night and the sudden appearance of apparitions, it seems to simulate a night at the movies: the audience enters the cinema, the lights are turned off, and illusions on the silver-screen begin. Additionally, leaving the cinema is metaphorically mentioned in *Nosferatu*: “As soon as the sun rose, the shadows of the night vanished”¹³ (N: 0:27:48; transl.). The shadows leave Hutter, like the illusions of the cinema vanish, if the light is turned on again. Nevertheless, when the lights vanish, the next movie will be played, just like the shadows inevitably haunt Hutter after sunset: “The ghostly light of the evening seemed to revive the shadows of the castle again”¹⁴ (N: 0:31:54; transl.). This last commentary moves this discourse even further into the realm of the cinema: Not the darkness casts the shadows, but the ghostly light of the evening. Thus, the light awakens the shadows in *Nosferatu*’s realm, as the projector revives the dead images on celluloid.

That cinema is the realm of the vampire also becomes clear by the plethora of vampire movies that connect vampirism to cinema, films, and their production. In Zulueta’s *Arrebato* (1980), the camera of a frustrated horror-filmmaker appears to produce red frames, drains its subjects from their life-force, and gains life on its own. In *Bram Stoker’s Dracula* (1992) by Francis Ford Coppola, film features prominently on a fair the Count visits and is shown side by side with its technological predecessors like the phantasmagoria and shadow plays. Gelder notes in this respect that “filming Stoker’s novel about Dracula also involves filming the beginnings of film itself” (Gelder 1994: 89). Jordan’s *Interview with the Vampire* (1994; [ed.] see also Stuart Robinson’s article in this *Nordlit* issue) features the present as a world, where vampires can experience (electrical) light and even a sunrise in the movies: The protagonist Louis watches *Sunrise: A Song of two Humans* (1927) by F. W. Murnau (of course famous for his own vampire film) and describes this as a sublime experience (cf. Butzer 2015: 25–26). Recent films still connect cinema and vampirism. Lee and Prowse’s found-footage horror film *Afflicted* (2013) shows the two directors filming for their traveling-blog ‘Ends of the Earth’. Here, Lee is infected by a vampire and eventually accepts his new vampiric nature by using his powers and his hunger against those who deserve to die (which is a take on the typical origin movie of a superhero-franchise). Kölsch and Widmyer’s *Starry Eyes* (2014) depicts the movie-industry as a kind of satanic cult, turning a young actress into a fabulous, blood-sucking vampire queen of a production company called *Astraeus*. The vampire becomes a method of self-reflexively speaking about cinema via movies themselves, with *Nosferatu* as the first movie that connects vampirism with cinema (cf. Keppler 2006: 14–23; Gelder 1994: 87–90).

However, until now I have only read *Nosferatu* on a metaphorical level that connects cinema and vampirism. Nevertheless, this connection can be and has already been made also on the film’s formal level, since filmic techniques show the vampiric traits of this medium (Weinstock 2012: 50; Butzer 2015: 24–26). Abbott, for example, creates a genealogy of the filmic process that “was informed by nineteenth-century technologies

¹² As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Kaum hatte Hutter die Brücke überschritten, da ergriffen ihn die unheimlichen Gesichte, von denen er mir oft erzählt hat” (N: 0:21:40).

¹³ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Sobald die Sonne stieg, wichen auch von Hutter die Schatten der Nacht” (N: 0:27:48).

¹⁴ As translated by the author. Original text in German: “Das gespenstische Licht des Abends schien die Schatten des Schlosses wiederum zu beleben” (N: 0:31:54).

that bridged the gap between the scientific and the supernatural and were absorbed into the film language of *Nosferatu* to become a defining part of the vampire film's cinematic heritage" (Abbott 2007: 45).

I would read the vampire in terms of 'remediation'. This means that whenever *Nosferatu*'s strategy shifts from immediacy to hypermediacy, the vampire is present and, therefore, connected to film. This shift from the logic of transparent immediacy to the logic of hypermedia is a precursor of the Hollywood style, in which "transparency is mental balance, while hypermediacy is mental dysfunction" (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 152). Similarly, the vampire as deviant here is characterized by hypermediacy and, thus, a disruption of *Nosferatu*'s logic of transparent immediacy.

Before Hutter travels to Count Orlok, the film only used simple fade-ins and fade-outs. This, however, changes to an excessive use of the medial potential of film. Most peculiar are the filmic effects that display the Count's abilities. His carriage moves with supernatural speed, which is realized through a lesser framerate (cf. Weinstock 2012: 80). Further, Hutter's entrance into the realm of shadows is illustrated by cutting in negatives that invert the film's colors (cf. Abbott 2007: 52; Butzer 2015: 25): Hutter travels from the bright world of light into the dark world of shadows. Furthermore, the Count has no spatial boundaries as he disappears once with his carriage and reappears seconds later in front of Hutter. Even though this ability is not clearly named, it shows the power of the filmic cut that allows Orlok to teleport himself (cf. Abbott 2007: 53–54). Similar cases are the autonomously opening and closing doors. *Nosferatu* hides the real cause of these movements through pre-planned shots and the doors seem to be moving on their own.

Consequently, the powers and abilities of the vampire depend on the technical circumstances of film. The act of watching a film (and creating worlds through visuals composed by cuts and framing) differs from the real act of everyday seeing, as the monstrous creature of the vampire deviates from reality: both movie and vampire act outside the rules of space, time, and causality (cf. Keppler 2006: 17). Count Orlok only exists in this form because of these circumstances that render him a purely filmic-technical entity (cf. Weinstock 2012: 82). The vampire, thus, contradicts the logic of transparent immediacy and marks moments of hypermediacy within *Nosferatu*.



Figure 2. ‘Count Orlok’ emerges from the dark, simulating the beginning of a film’s projection (*N*: 0:22:35); screenshot taken by the author.

The most famous image of *Nosferatu* is that of his shadow (cf. Weinstock 2012: 81). It is a creation of Murnau himself and cannot be found in the original novel (cf. Joslin 2006 [1999]: 17), but it adapts Dracula’s lack of corporeality (cf. Ruthner 2006: 42). The shadow directly illustrates the connection between vampire and cinema (Kaes 2014: 38; Butzer 2015: 24), since it is only the projection of a body on a white surface as the cinema is only a projection of light (cf. Weinstock 2012: 81–82). An addition in comparison to the novel is the inevitable destruction of the vampire through sunlight (Joslin 2006 [1999]: 17). This characteristic connects Orlok directly to cinema and its material form: celluloid is instantly destroyed, if overexposed to direct sunlight (Gelder 1994: 97).



Figure 3. In *Nosferatu*, the ‘Count’ transforms into a shadow. This is one addition to the vampire compared to *Dracula* and highlights the vampire’s self-reflexive potential concerning film (*N*: 0:32:50); screenshot taken by the author.

The destruction of the creature is closely associated with what Bolter and Grusin call a contact point: “The common feature of all these forms [of immediacy] is the belief in some necessary contact points between the medium and what it represents. For those who believe in the immediacy of photography [...] the contact point is the light that is reflected from the objects on to the film” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 30). Film’s point of contact is also light. *Nosferatu* is destroyed by his contact to reality, as a personification of the logic of hypermediacy. This perspective renders *Nosferatu*’s death a strong rejection of hypermediacy in favor of film’s potential for immediacy. The vampire (as a personification of the medium film) must eventually vanish for filmic transparency and immediacy to prolong. It is an almost literal erasure of the medium.

Nosferatu stages the act of going to the cinema as a journey into the realm of shadows and ghosts created through the film and directed according to its rules. The vampire himself is presented as a technical-filmic entity, which gains and defines its existence through the technical circumstances of the medium film. The parallels between Hutter’s journey and cinema combined with the portrayal of vampirism by hypermediacy (making the audience aware of the medium film) render film deeply connected to vampirism. An awareness of the medium, however, is characterized as deviant by

association with the vampire and, through the final destruction by sunlight, rendered an irrelevant logic (at least in the argumentation of *Nosferatu*).

In the next section I will address a vampire movie situated in an emerging hypermedia environment: *Shadow of the Vampire* (2000). This movie acknowledges that contemporary hypermedia-structures seem to form a reality on their own. However, it uses the form of a fictional making of—a remediation within the medium that “does not violate the presumed sanctity of the medium” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 49). Hypermedia strife for the real in “the viewer’s experience [...] by multiplying mediation” and create an experience that resembles being in a hypermedia world (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 53). However, in opposition to *Dracula*, *Shadow of the Vampire* does not try to remediate itself. Rather it deconstructs *Nosferatu*’s implied claim of immediacy and reflects on the changing relation between media and reality in the 21st century.

***Shadow of the Vampire* as Reflection on *Nosferatu*’s Immediacy**

Shadow of the Vampire (2000) is a remediation “within a single medium—for example, when a film borrows from an earlier film [...] or when a painting incorporates another painting” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 49). *Shadow of the Vampire* borrows, most obviously, from *Nosferatu*: its storyline, its rendition of Murnau’s aesthetics, and the characterization of Murnau and Schreck based on extra-filmic discourses. Here, *Shadow of the Vampire* self-reflexively addresses *Nosferatu*’s claim for immediacy and devalues it by mixing historical facts (the production of the movie *Nosferatu*) with fiction (*Nosferatu*’s actual plot, aesthetics, and the myths surrounding it).

First, *Shadow of the Vampire* adapts the story of *Nosferatu* into the story of its production. Here, Murnau is the central figure and functionalized as a version of *Nosferatu*’s Knock (cf. Houswitschka 2005: 65). Murnau initiates the journey to Czechoslovakia and thus acts like Knock who initiates Hutter’s journey to Transylvania. They are also parallelized through their similar travels: they change from train to horse-carriage, like Hutter did in *Nosferatu*. Since the film-team shoots on real substitutes for the actual settings, they are always situated on the same location as their fictional characters. This parallel becomes apparent through the scenes in the hostel. It is not only a setting, but also a shelter for Murnau’s team; it is functionalized similarly to the diegetic world of *Nosferatu* (cf. *SV*: 0:16:00). Further, Max Schreck’s role resembles Orlok’s, for they are both vampires pretending to be humans. Consequently, *Nosferatu*’s story also transforms into the (fictional) story of its production and they become almost indistinguishable within *Shadow of the Vampire*’s diegesis.

Second, *Shadow of the Vampire* adapts Murnau’s aesthetics of immediacy which I have described in the section on *Nosferatu*. This perspective of film as the medium of immediacy becomes Murnau’s destructive obsession in *Shadow of the Vampire*, as the film clearly states through an insert: “F. W. Murnau then creates the most realistic vampire film ever made and establishes himself amongst the greatest directors of all time” (*SV*: 0:05:40). This is also reflected in the dustcoats and sunglasses used in the film. Historically, these served as a precaution from the strong light on contemporary sets.¹⁵ Here, it renders Murnau a mad scientist that Houswitschka reads as one cause for

¹⁵ Safety glasses were obligatory, since the film used at this time was less sensitive to light than its modern counterpart and, thus, a stronger light irradiation was utilized (cf. Houswitschka 2005: 65).

a shift from an aesthetic discourse to a quasi-scientific one (Houswitschka 2005: 64–65). However, one could also relate this to immediacy as Murnau’s aesthetic principle, if we consider his short manifesto:

Because we have the moving picture, our paintings will grow and recede. Our poetry will be shadows that lengthen and conceal. Our light will play across living faces that laugh and agonize. And our music will linger and finally overwhelm because it will have a context as certain as the grave. We are scientists engaged in the creation of memory, but our memory will neither blur nor fade (*SV*: 0:14:00).

This is an adaptation of *Nosferatu*’s perspective on film as the prime medium of immediacy of its time. Here, Murnau describes film as the logical consequence and improvement on various media (painting, poetry, music) and a connection of apparent dichotomies (grow-recede, lengthen-conceal, laugh-agonize, linger-overwhelm) that all become re-experienceable like a memory that “neither blur[s] nor fade[s]” (*ibid.*). Movies become an immediate entry point to an experience resembling life in an untainted way that is endlessly repeatable.

Finally, the diegetic story of *Nosferatu* is complemented by myths surrounding Murnau, Schreck, and the production of the real movie. Here, the breach between reality and fiction does not occur within the diegesis (i.e. *Nosferatu* and its fictional production), but rather with discourses from outside the narrative. *Shadow of the Vampire* primarily refers to a common characterization of Murnau popular in the 1990s, which depicted him as a perfectionist and “dictator on the set” (Houswitschka 2005: 66).

Further, the myths surrounding Max Schreck are integrated. Since the mid-1980s rumors spread that Schreck had ‘really been’ a vampire. According to Thomas Elsaesser, this theory is based on the amalgamation of the vampire as a metaphor for the attitude of a star as well as the mysterious and barely recognizable person of Max Schreck underneath the make-up (Elsaesser 2009: 90). His ‘telling name’¹⁶ might be a reason for the uncertainty concerning his persona, which is also considered a source for suspicion in *Shadow of the Vampire*: “His name is Schreck. Max Schreck. [...] Schreck? You’re sure you have the name right? [...] I’ve never heard of any Max Schreck in the Reinhard Company” (*SV*: 0:10:50). Consequently, reality is also questioned on the conceptual level of *Shadow of the Vampire*. These discourses based on myths and rumors oppose the setting of a making-of and alleged re-enactments of the historical figures of Murnau and Schreck.

Shadow of the Vampire uses remediation within a single medium to question the borders between fiction and reality and, in doing so, questions the core-concept of immediacy deployed in the real *Nosferatu*. Through the mixture of *Nosferatu*’s plot with the story of its production, the integration of the logic of immediacy as the fictional Murnau’s agenda, and the integration of the myths surrounding the real personas of

¹⁶ The German actor’s (1879–1936) name could also be ‘translated’ into ‘Max Fear’ or ‘Max Horror’, since the German term ‘Schreck’ refers to [English:] fear; fright; shock; scare; horror. Indeed, the German expression ‘Oh Schreck!’ can be translated into [English:] ‘Horror of horrors!’. By sheer coincidence, Schreck’s forename Max adds additional emphasis, as in [English:] ‘max[-imal/-imum]’.

Schreck and Murnau, *Shadow of the Vampire* argues against the immediacy of film as its prime feature.

In the next section, then, I will address the relation between Murnau and Schreck in *Shadow of the Vampire*. Despite Murnau's attempt at creating realism through film, he eventually suffers from film's impact on reality. This inversion explains how media, exemplified by film, rather form a reality than depict it in a contemporary understanding.

Murnau and Schreck as 'Doppelgänger' and the Failure of Immediacy in Film

Murnau and Schreck are 'Doppelgänger' that connect film ('Murnau') and vampirism ('Schreck') through their resemblance of each other. This also addresses the relation between reality and film, since Murnau (a historical figure and cipher for reality) is influenced by the vampire and film. He tries to create the most realistic vampire movie ever made, but in *Shadow of the Vampire*, the opposite is true. Instead of creating a film that resembles reality much akin to a virtual reality (cf. Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 21), reality starts to resemble the movie he tries to shoot: Instead of creating immediacy, Murnau is taken over by his vision and his film and, eventually, becomes vampiric himself.

Murnau resembles the vampire first on a metaphoric level: he deliberately sacrifices his crew to prevail. He absorbs the life of his team into his filmic vision and thus acts like a vampire (cf. Houswitschka 2005: 65). Consequently, the similarities of Schreck and Murnau become even more apparent; whereas Murnau only subsists metaphorically on his team, Schreck feeds quite literally on them.

Murnau resembles Schreck further on a formal level through filmic techniques. Arriving at the castle, they film the first encounter of Hutter and Count Orlok. Here, Murnau utters the following stage direction: "You are afraid. Who is the person who brought you?" (*SV*: 0:22:00). In the corresponding scene from *Nosferatu*, Hutter also turns around and sees the Count riding away (*N*: 0:23:45 onwards). In *Shadow of the Vampire*, the camera does not cut to this image, but Murnau standing behind Gustav (cf. Baeva 2014: 265). His question also emphasizes the connection between these images, as Murnau actually brought him there, just like the Count brought Hutter to his castle. Murnau is depicted as vampiric, since he essentially acts as Orlok's 'Doppelgänger'. The use of shadows also connects Murnau with Schreck and is borrowed from *Nosferatu* (*N*: 1:28:18).

However, there is another element connecting the vampire and the director: the camera as a vampiric device. First, there is its functionality, as "it gives immortality by taking away the flesh and blood of its subjects [...] and transform[s] them into enduring spectres and shadows on screen" (Baeva 2014: 269). This idea can be seen in the make-up used for the actors on the fictitious set of *Nosferatu*, as they look like skulls (Baeva 2014: 269). Also, the cameraman Wolf seems to be drained off life every time he rolls the camera. Thus, the camera itself seems to be the vampire, especially since Max Schreck is never shown sucking his blood. Greta even comments on the life-draining power of the camera (Baeva 2014: 269): "A theatrical audience gives me life, while this... *thing*... merely takes it from me" (*SV*: 0:08:19; emphasis added).



Figures 4a–4d. Here, Murnau (bottom; left and right) in *Shadow of the Vampire* is characterized as vampiric by using the same style of depiction that was used for *Nosferatu*'s vampire and Max Schreck (top; left and right), the movie's 'actual' vampire. By using the same shadow-technique to represent both the vampire and the director, the 'Doppelgänger' motif is enacted on the level of style (*SV*: 0:18:23 and *SV*: 0:34:45 for Murnau; *SV*: 1:04:31 and *SV*: 1:05:35 for Schreck); screenshots taken by the author.

The last scene reveals the vampirism of the camera as well, as Murnau films the death of his remaining crew (cf. *SV*: 1:20:00 onwards). The cuts in the lens of the camera increase, while it reflects more and more light and the life seems to be drained from Murnau's eyes and face.

At the same moment, Schreck also dies by a filmic mechanism: the admittance of light through the opening of a gate equals the exposure of film (Baeva 2014: 269), which already appeared in the original *Nosferatu* (Gelder 1994: 97). Additionally, Schreck's death is portrayed as a burning and crumbling stripe of celluloid, which connects it directly to the medium film and the connection to Bolter and Grusin's contact points becomes even clearer. Here, the former metaphorical overexposure of film in *Nosferatu* becomes a depiction of a literal overexposure within a filmic mechanism. Since light in this conception becomes a marker of immediacy and connection to reality, the vampire as personification of film is destroyed by an overexposure of reality. Whereas in *Nosferatu* the destruction of the vampire through light signified the victory of immediacy over hypermediacy, here it signifies the failure of this concept. The vampire has been defeated and the presumably most realistic vampire film is finished. However, for Murnau this obsession with immediacy ends tragic. His destiny is hinted at in a conversation between Grau and Galeen about Stoker's *Dracula*: "It made me sad. [...] Dracula hasn't had servants for 400 years" (*SV*: 0:49:20). As Dracula or Orlok before him, Murnau remains alone. As the vampire is without servants, the director is without his crew.

Shadow of the Vampire not only borrows the story of *Nosferatu* and its production as well as its aesthetics, but it dissolves the borders between fiction and reality and, in turn, between medium and vampire. The vampire here becomes a method of addressing the hypermedia world in which cinema is now integrated and that is defined by an inverted relation between media and reality: “Transparent digital applications seek to get to the real by bravely denying the fact of mediation; digital hypermedia seek the real by multiplying mediation so as to create a feeling of fullness, a satiety of experience, which can be taken as reality” (Bolter/Grusin 2000 [1999]: 53). Trenchantly formulated by the fictional Murnau, this means that, “If it’s not in the frame, it doesn’t exist!” (*SV*: 1:21:50). Whereas *media* of immediacy strive for the erasure of their mediation, *hypermedia* strive for a recreation of audience’s feeling of being in a world defined by its media.

Conclusion

I demonstrated that *Dracula* uses a structure akin to an early or prototypic hypermedia strategy in order to remediate itself during the emergence of technical and mass-media. This is accompanied by the ‘creature Dracula’ as a personification of the novel’s structure and the media it incorporates and displays. Both the novel and the vampire thrive on the new media emerging at this time and acknowledge the need for an open form of media and their borders to prolong the existence of the novel. The vampire becomes a technique to reflect on the medium he is portrayed in.

With entering the cinema, the vampire becomes a filmic creature. *Nosferatu* here engages in a narrative of film as the medium that can provide immediacy. Through remediation as absorption it incorporates textual media and addresses its condition as a filmic adaption of its predecessor *Dracula*. Deploying similar strategies, *Nosferatu* considers film the logical continuation of the novel and an improvement in terms of immediacy. In *Nosferatu*, the vampire is connected to the logic of hypermedia that brings to the fore its own mediation through diegetic remarks and filmic techniques. *However*, the destruction of the vampire through sunlight (the contact point between film and reality) renders this logic irrelevant and undisrupted immediacy pertains.

Finally, *Shadow of the Vampire* addresses the situation of film in a hypermedia environment that does not depict reality but strives to achieve the real by re-creating the experience of being in a world dominated by media. As a fictional making-of it first devalues *Nosferatu*’s claim of immediacy by questioning the very potential of film to even depict the real. The inversion from film depicting the real to reality being influenced by film is portrayed through the relation of (the fictional versions of) Murnau and Schreck. Through the narrative and the filmic aesthetics, Murnau is compared to a vampire and shows vampiric traits through his obsession with his project’s realism. His endeavor ends in tragedy: The final scene of Orlok’s defeat in *Nosferatu* is re-enacted but its meaning changes: The vampire dies from overexposure of reality but leaves Murnau alone like Dracula and Schreck have been before him. This shows that the obsession with film’s alleged immediacy is destined to fail in a new media world where media influence reality rather than the opposite.

I have addressed several instances of remediation within vampire-media in different times and turning points in media-history. The vampire becomes a technique to speak self-reflexively about the medium itself and its standing in each contemporary media-

landscape. Remediation has proven to be a well-suited terminology to describe the relation of these different media in their respective environments: Be it to remediate as in to rehabilitate like in *Dracula*, remediation as reform to ascertain the supremacy of one medium over the other like in *Nosferatu*, or remediation within one medium as this supremacy is receding with the emergence of digital hypermedia like in *Shadow of the Vampire*.

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Biographical Note

Alexander Lehner is a doctorate candidate in English Literature at the University of Augsburg, where he worked as an assistant editor for *Anglia—Journal of English Philology* and teaches the subject of game studies. His dissertation focuses on the function of meta-fictional and self-reflexive video games in relation to the networked society. With Augsburg’s ‘Environmental Humanities Research Group’, he has published on ecocriticism in relation to self-reflexive video games in *Ecozon@* and *Paidia* and also works on the concept of ‘Regenerative Play’ together with Gerald Farca. Aside from game studies and meta-games, he is also interested in self-reflexivity in media, film and especially horror fiction.